



METROPOLITAN  
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January 7, 2000

*James T. Beall Jr., Chair*  
Santa Clara County

*Sharon J. Brown, Vice Chair*  
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*Ralph J. Appezato*  
Cities of Alameda County

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and Urban Development

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City and County of San Francisco

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U.S. Department of Transportation

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Napa County and Cities

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Sonoma County and Cities

*Harry Yabata*  
State Business, Transportation  
and Housing Agency

*Lawrence D. Dabms*  
Executive Director

*Steve Heminger*  
Deputy Executive Director

Bruce D. Ohlson  
3829 Los Altos Place  
Pittsburg, CA 94565-6110

Dear Mr. Ohlson:

MTC Commission Chair Jim Beall has asked me to respond to your letter of December 18, 1999 regarding bicycle access to bridges spanning the Bay.

Bicycle/pedestrian access already is provided on the Golden Gate, Antioch, and Dumbarton bridges. Moreover, the new Carquinez and Benicia bridges to be constructed in the next few years each will include a bicycle/pedestrian path, and the project to widen the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge includes a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing of Route 92 on the Hayward side to improve access for the Bay Trail, and a bicycle shuttle across the bridge itself is planned.

In addition, as you may know, the design of the new eastern span of the Bay Bridge includes a 15-foot wide bicycle/pedestrian path that will extend between Yerba Buena Island and a planned Gateway Park on the Oakland shore, connecting directly to the planned Bay Trail and the Eastshore State Park. Caltrans will soon conduct an engineering and cost study of attaching a bicycle/pedestrian path to the western span of the Bridge. Through state legislation, this west-span path is eligible for bridge toll surcharge funds at MTC's disposal, and a decision on expending those funds will be made following the conclusion of the Caltrans study.

Although we do not yet have bicycle/pedestrian access on all eight Bay Area toll bridges, I hope you will agree that we are headed in a positive direction. Thank you for your interest in this issue.

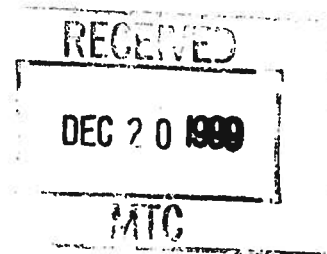
Sincerely,

  
Steve Heminger  
Deputy Executive Director

cc: Commissioner Jim Beall

Beall, Dahms, Heninger, Bittle — for response  
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(925) 439-5848  
bruceolehlson@hotmail.com  
to Marj on 1/4/00  
December 18, 1999

Jim Beall, Chair  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
101 Eighth Street  
Oakland CA 94607



Dear Mr. Beall,

The time has come. We must allow the operation of bicycles on all the bridges spanning the Bay. Cycling offers a non-polluting, healthy alternative to driving. Every bicycle that you see on the road is one fewer car on the road.

The argument that bicyclists are denied access to Bay Area bridges for their own safety is specious. It is no less safe to bicycle in a shoulder lane on a bridge than it is to bicycle in a shoulder lane on any road in the state. Look at the collision statistics for the over 1,000 miles of California freeways that allow bicycling.

The argument that bicyclists are denied access to Bay Area bridges because some of the bridges lack shoulder lanes begs the question. It would be very simple to reconfigure the necessary traffic lanes to provide a reasonable-width shoulder lane without any decrease in vehicular traffic.

Bicycle access across the Bay Bridge is long overdue and will increase the quality of life for both bicyclists and motorists.

Thank you very much for your immediate attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

Bruce D. Ohlson  
Cyclist

cc: East Bay Bicycle Coalition  
Bike the Bridge Coalition